

Message Text

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43

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 A-01 OPR-02 SY-05 OC-05 CCO-00

SCCT-01 AID-05 /092 W

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O R 251122Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6823

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON UK

COMMSIXTHFLT

CTF SIX ZERO

CTF SIX ONE

CTF SIX TWO

CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO

FOSIF ROTA SPAIN

FINCEURLAND NORFOLK VA

DIA WASHDC

CIA WASHDC

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 13277

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, LE

SUBJECT: FIGHTING ERUPTS AGAIN IN BEIRUT

REF: BEIRUT 13256 (24 OCT 75, 1500Z)

1. SUMMARY: FIGHTING ESCALATED SHARPLY IN BEIRUT LATE OCT. 24 AND NIGHT OCT. 24-25. IT CONTINUES AS OF 1100 HOURS (LOCAL) OCT. 25, AT SLIGHTLY REDUCED INTENSITY. CAPITAL'S ECONOMY REMAINS VIRTUALLY PARALYZED. ALL THREE SUB-COMMITTEES OF "NATIONAL DIALOGUE" MET YESTERDAY. PARLIAMENT IS SCHEDULED TO CONVENE TODAY, AND IF IT DOES MEET INTEREST CENTERS ON WHETHER KARAME WILL SPEAK AGAIN ON RECORD OF HIS GOVERNMENT. END SUMMARY.

2. AN UPSURGE OF VIOLENCE TOOK PLACE IN BEIRUT LATE OCT. 24 AND NIGHT OF OCT. 24-25. FIGHTING ERUPTED BETWEEN CHIYAH (SHIITE) AND AIN EL RUMANEH (CHRISTIAN), TWO QUARTERS THAT HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN CLASHES ONLY SPORADICALLY DURING LAST TWO WEEKS OR SO. FIGHTING ALSO CONTINUED AROUND RAS EL-NABA, SOUTH OF CITY'S CENTER, AND BETWEEN LAILEKE (MIXED MOSLEM-CHRISTIAN) AND HADATH (CHRISTIAN) IN SOUTHERN OUTSKIRTS OF CAPITAL. IN ADDITION, THREE FACTORIES WERE BURNED IN DIFFERENT AREAS - THE SECOND NIGHT THIS PRACTICE HAS OCCURRED, GIVING RISE TO SPECULATION THAT CERTAIN UNKNOWN GROUPS ARE DELIBERATELY AIMING AT ECONOMIC SABOTAGE.

3. BY MORNING OCT. 25, THE FIGHTING HAD SUBSIDED SLIGHTLY INTO WHAT AN OBSERVER AT INTERNAL SECURITY HQ IN BEIRUT CALLED A "RELATIVE CALM, BUT NOT A REAL CALM." SNIPERS REMAINED ACTIVE IN VARIOUS PLACES AND THERE CONTINUED TO BE EXCHANGES OF FIRE, WHICH AT LAST REPORT AS OF 1100 HOURS (LOCAL) HAD BECOME SERIOUS IN KANTARI AREA OF WEST CENTRAL BEIRUT.

4. ARMY TODAY IS MANNING CHECK POINTS AT VARIOUS ENTRANCES TO THE CAPITAL, PATROLLING SEBMENTS OF
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OUTLYING ROADS AND PROTECTING FUEL DEPOTS AND GRAIN MILLS IN THE VICINITY OF DORA.

5. THE BEKAA VALLEY REMAINS TENSE, BUT APPARENTLY THE ARMY IS STILL ABLE TO KEEP THE SITUATION UNDER CONTROL.

6. ECONOMY OF BEIRUT REMAINS VIRTUALLY PARALYZED

FOR SEVENTH DAY. IN MEETING YESTERDAY, CHAMBER OF
COMME
CE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE EXPRESSED CONCERN AT
FACT THAT FACTORIES AND OTHER BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENTS
ARE INCREASINGLY TARGET OF SABOTEURS.

7. YESTERDAY'S MEETING OF THE POLITICAL SUB-COMMITTEE
OF THE "NATIONAL DIALOGUE" ASSIGNED EDMOND RABBATH,
ONE OF ITS MEMBERS WHO SPECIALIZES IN CONSTITUTIONAL
LAW, TO DRAW
UP A SUTDY ON CONFESSIONALISM, ITEM NO. 1
ON THE SUB-COMMITTEE'S AGENDA. THE CONOMIC AND SOCIAL
SUB-COMMITTEES ALSO HELD A JOINT SESSION YESTERDAY
WHICH REESULTED IN A DECISION TO INVITE WRITTEN OPINIONS
FROM VARIOUS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ORGANS, SUCH AS
THE BEIRUT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY AND THE
LABOR FEDERATION. THE MEMBERS ALSO AFFIRMED THEIR
BELIEF THAT THE WORK OF THESE TWO SUB-COMMITTEES DEPENDS
ON PROGRESS IN THE POLITICAL SUB-COMMITTEE.

8. POLITICAL INTEREST CENTERS ON TODAY'S SCHEDULED
PARLIAMENTARY SESSION. THERE IS CONSIDERABLE QUESTION
WHETHER THE SESSION WILL OCCUR, NOT ONLY BECAUSE IN-
SECURE CONDITIONS MAY FORCE DEPUTIES TO STAY AWAY BUT
ALSO BECAUSE SOME POLITICAL LEADERS ARE TRYING TO KEEP
THE EMERGING FEUD BETWEEN PREMIER KARAME, ON ONE HAND,
AND PRESIDENT FRANGIE AND INTERIOR MINISTER HCAMOUN,
ON OTHER, FROM BREAKING IRRETRIEVABLY INTO THE OPEN.
IT ALMOST ERUPTED LAST THURSDAY WHEN KARAME DEFENDED HIS
RECORD AS HEAD OF GOVERNMENT AND CRITICIZED CHAMOUN AND
FRANGIE IN INDIRECT FASHION.
GODLEY

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